

# Poems By The Way

-----  
HENRY ARCHIE DIEHL







D 6








THREE DOZEN POEMS BY THE WAY  
THREE DOZEN POEMS SAD AND GAY





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019



Three Dozen Poems By The Way  
Three Dozen Poems Sad And Gay

BY  
Henry Archie Diehl



CLEVELAND, O.  
THE O. I. DARE COMPANY  
1906



**COPYRIGHT, 1906**  
**BY**  
**HENRY ARCHIE DIEHL**

**REPUBLICAN PRINTING COMPANY**  
**CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA**



Dedicated

To

My Wife

Gentlest of Critics, who loves poetry,  
and charitably concedes to the author  
a niche in the Hall of Fame







## P R E F A C E

Half in jest, half in earnest, at this last day of school, I relinquish control over some six and thirty vagrant children. If some should be well received, and if a knowledge of the fact reaches me, I shall be well pleased; not that I may strut vainglorious upon a mock literary stage, but that it may, in a measure, justify the hours stolen from sterner duties among scenes and characters, some of which are herein reflected; that I may again, without self-censure leave the thoughts and fancies of other men, to entertain my own.

HENRY ARCHIE DIEHL

Farmdale, Ohio

November 5, 1906







## PROSPECT(us)

---

That young hound barking up the tree,  
May have a tiger! Come and see!

· · · · ·  
It was our tiger cat, La me!







## PROEM

---

We meet each other in the street,  
We pass each other on our way,  
We talk about the meals we eat,  
Or, passing, call the time of day.

Sometimes perhaps, in guarded tone  
We speak the magic word of love,  
Or, half unwillingly, we own  
A longing for the life above.

Unknown to me the better thought  
That greets you at your waking hour;  
The lessons that your life has taught,  
Or what the sources of your power!

O speak a sermon, sing a song,  
Or write a poem, if but one,  
That we, observing what you do,  
May know the thing you would have done!







## CONTENTS

DEDICATION .....	5
PREFACE .....	7
PROSPECT (US) .....	9
PROEM .....	11
INTRODUCTORY POEMS	
Fame, Favor, (Fortune ?) .....	17
To Poetry .....	18
Transformed .....	19
Poetry Quietus .....	20
A Criticism .....	22
Books .....	23
The Song Abundant .....	24
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS	
Life .....	29
John M. ....	30
Epitaph for John D. ....	31
Neighbor Levi .....	32
Youth to the Present .....	34
Act on, Roosevelt! .....	36
To an Absent Friend .....	37
The Death House .....	38
Sick .....	39
The Riddle .....	41
Errors .....	42
George Aged Thirteen .....	43
POEMS OF NATURE	
Morning Twilight .....	47
The Rainy Day .....	48
The Poet's Portion .....	50
Parson Brown's Walk .....	52
POEMS DEVOTIONAL	
Easter Poem .....	57
Sunday Morning .....	58
POEMS OF SCHOOL LIFE	
A Hard Test on the Circle .....	61
The District School .....	62
To a Little Girl .....	63



## TO WOMAN AND WOMANHOOD

To an Interesting Young Lady.....	67
The Singer.....	69
To ———.....	70
Love's Faery Land.....	71

## POEMS FROM A LIGHT HEART

Bloomers .....	77
A Love Ballad.....	78
For a Literary Occasion.....	80
Out of Sorts at the Merry-making.....	82
The Cyclopedia Man.....	84
Courtship of Adam and Eve.....	85
Larue .....	87



## INTRODUCTORY POEMS







FAME, FAVOR, (FORTUNE?)

---

I am very glad to meet you,  
You have often heard of me!  
Do I look much like the fellow  
You have pictured me to be?

I am glad you've always spoken  
In the highest terms of me!  
*Good* and *Great*, are joined together  
For a favored two or three!

May I write this in your album,  
In a place where all can see;  
When you hear folks say "a good deal,"  
Or, "a great deal," think of me?

H. A. DIEHL



TO POETRY

---

O Poetry, sweet Poetry,  
A fair handmaiden thou!  
Thou bearest off, from time to time,  
My fevered thought in fitful rhyme.  
Do I behold thee now?

O Poetry, sweet Poetry,  
Thy hand is on my brow!  
Thou biddest me sing  
Of love, or spring,  
Or anything; and thou  
Didst minister to bards of old,  
Whose pleasant page to me,  
Nor half condemns myself, like them,  
For lounging 'neath this tree.

---

TRANSFORMED

---

The whole world seems transformed, to me,  
Since to my life came Poetry!  
The bashful swain with jest uncouth,  
The modest maid who stands aloof,  
Assume a meaning fair to see,  
Through the sweet eyes of Poetry.

The whole world seems transformed, to me!  
A dreary waste of land or sea;  
The sunlight bursting o'er the lea,  
Seem imaged in our lives, to be,  
Since to my life came Poetry.

The whole world seems transformed, to me!  
The heartless villain's artful plea;  
The snare the Tempter lays for me,  
Seem viler than they e'er could be,  
Ere to my life came Poetry.

The whole world seems transformed, to me!  
The birds sing in a sweeter key;  
A softer tint comes o'er the tree,  
Man's love for man is fair to see,  
Since to my Life came Poetry.



POETRY QUIETUS

---

My work bears heavy on me. Anyway,  
The freshened strength, with which I greet each day,  
Is worn and fretted from me, ere the night.  
A flood of morning light  
Forbodes the Heavenly Day;  
A train's low rumble far away,  
The sound of childhood's artless play  
Suggests a thousand harmonies.  
But, ere I sound their second note,  
The music, dying in my throat,  
Yields to remonstrance or command.  
A night of toil succeeds a day  
Of labor, and there drops away  
A page from Life's book blank and bare.

My Soul how arrogantly grown!  
Art thou emboldened then to think  
Thy musings worthy of the ink  
From bottles other than thine own?  
My Soul then falters this pretext,  
To spare its vanity a blow:  
"Someone, sometime, may thrill to know  
I voiced a thought they only felt."

Soul to thy work! Thy musing thought  
Is little worth to anyone.  
Not what you *thought*, what you have *done*  
What you can *do*, alone, is worth  
The vantage ground you hold, of earth.  
For other men have dreamed and mused,  
And turned the searchlight on themselves;  
Their darling theories, unused,  
Lay bound in books on dusty shelves.

Then to thy work! This age is right,  
Whose emblem is the dollar mark.  
For every dollar is a spark  
To pierce the darkness of despair,  
To purge Disease's filthy lair  
And hunt the monster Crime, from where  
It sullen fattens in the dark.

Then why attempt, at second hand,  
In lines that few will care to see  
To picture either bird or tree?  
Place, at some hungering eye's command,  
A *real tree*, rooted in a land  
Unknown to want and misery.



A CRITICISM

---

To make the sense still more intense,  
To make the thought more striking,  
The poet's mind will quickly find  
Some object to its liking.

The rhymester seems amid his dreams  
To fasten on some beauty,  
And then to fit some thought to it,  
He seems to feel his duty.

We search sometimes within his lines,  
We scarcely know what after;  
If truth in there, is anywhere,  
'Tis buried in metaphor.

Sometimes so far this serves to mar,  
We must become besiegers;  
Attack the text so that we next  
May comprehend the figures.

---

BOOKS

---

Read books, and draw their essence out—  
The life-blood from within,  
That waits to be what, to your life,  
To others it has been!

That you may be, at some sweet time,  
Like to a fair young flower  
That swung within a perfumed air,  
Through many a happy hour.

Till on some well appointed day  
Its bud became full blown,  
And spread upon the fragrant air  
A perfume of its own.



THE SONG ABUNDANT

---

O none may care to hear my song,  
But, O I can but sing,  
I cannot lay my harp aside,  
Nor still one trembling string!

The joy of life is so intense;  
Grief so disheartening;  
And jealousy is so immense,  
And love, so sweet a thing!

Upon the heaven's arching dome  
Such wondrous pictures bend;  
The rain and snow, the winds that blow,  
Such weal or woe portend!

The woodland stream, tall trees o'erlean,  
Invites me ever there,  
While Duty, with stentorian voice,  
Directs me elsewhere!

My spirit o'er the world would soar,  
Pursue transcendent beauty;  
My feet stand squarely on the floor  
Before some humdrum duty!

O I would sing from fall till spring  
Of that delightful lotion  
That makes life sweet, midst cold or heat,  
From ocean unto ocean!

My fancy dwells on sad farewells  
To friends, wealth and ambitions;  
On virtue lost, and fair minds crossed  
By lingering foul suspicions!

O I could break my being's bonds,  
Words are so insufficient,  
And pictures from the shadow land,  
So hopelessly deficient!

An oft repeated plaintive cry  
Is ever answered, 'never;'  
While vows are passed and dies are cast  
Forever and forever!





MISCELLANEOUS POEMS





---

LIFE

---

Life is a fierce contested game,  
On which we place our utmost stake.  
With every rattle of the dice  
We dreadful forfeits give or take.

Still, 'tis the game our Host provides,  
And obligates us all to play;  
Some play with flushed and eager face,  
But others, fain, would turn away.

Life is a gloomy tragedy,  
In which we're drafted to our part;  
With bursting sides we wear the black,  
Or play the fool with aching heart.

Life is a roistering comedy;  
Dressed in clown's touts, we watch the play,  
The buffoon calls, the curtain falls,  
We go away, but fain would stay.

Still, life is life; for, such is life:  
A subtle, unsolved mystery,  
A scroll uprolled, a dream untold,  
A long unwritten history.



JOHN M

---

John M, I rather like your style;  
It pleases you, it pleases me;  
Your plan of life is worth the while,  
However simple it may be.

No pictures of immortal fame  
Allure your mortal eye;  
You'll suck the sweetest juice from life,  
And, dying — simply die.

Unless a guarantee's attached,  
You'll never bid nor buy,  
Nor thrust a hand in slippery schemes  
That other men may try.

You half disprove the truth, that we  
Anticipate our joy;  
Yours comes to you, with every day,  
Pure gold without alloy.

No absent mind, your thought to find,  
Misjudges what is meant;  
Each fact at hand, may well command  
Complete abandonment.

And oft, behind a favorite steed,  
With your congenial wife,  
You talk of odds and ends that pass  
For comforts in this life.

"John M, each apple blossom here  
Is beauty, every bit,  
Do I hear right?" "What if we might  
Mature and market it?"

---

EPITAPH FOR JOHN D.

---

Vilify me, now I'm dead;  
Let the vilest things be said;  
They are all untrue! Instead:  
I had what you wanted.



NEIGHBOR LEVI

---

I scarcely knew his other name,  
Who, as a charter member came  
Into my infant hall of fame,  
My neighbor Levi.

With hurried step, and mind intent  
Upon some homely errand bent,  
He daily passed, with shrewd comment,  
My neighbor Levi.

We both were poor. God spare the mark!  
He diligently fanned a spark  
That drove back cold, and damp, and dark,  
My neighbor Levi.

A little, squat, square shouldered man,  
Built on the common people plan,  
Who always does the best he can,  
My neighbor Levi.

The boy was scarce half grown, until  
His help was needed. With a will  
He yielded it, and yields it still,  
My neighbor Levi.

A holiday comes, duly blest,  
His mind for work is so impressed,  
He almost finds it hard to rest,  
My neighbor Levi.

Sometimes, by this world's cares perplexed,  
He badly quotes some sacred text,  
And takes his chances for the next,  
My neighbor Levi.

To every honest man a friend;  
O, slow to mar, but quick to mend!  
Less free to borrow than to lend,  
My neighbor Levi.

He wears his sunshine in his heart,  
And lives his cheerful life, apart  
From crowded street, and busy mart,  
My neighbor Levi.

He taught the children, round his hearth,  
To get, and give, of things of earth,  
A dollar for a dollar's worth,  
My neighbor Levi.

I think of lavish hands, untaid,  
Of idlers lounging in the shade,  
Of thousands gained by tricks of trade,  
And neighbor Levi.

A dollar is a day of life;  
A thousand saved, a fearful strife;  
A hundred lost, cuts like a knife,  
My neighbor Levi.

I've wandered here and there, alone,  
I've asked for bread, to get a stone,  
But many loyal friends I've known,  
And neighbor Levi.

When on familiar ground we stand  
I grasp a chubby, calloused hand,  
A benediction soft and bland,  
From neighbor Levi.

YOUTH TO THE PRESENT

---

Let no future's all deceiving,  
Seeming brightness, dazzle me,  
Paling all my present pleasures  
By the ones that are to be!

Let me not pursue too blindly,  
Disregarding all my past,  
Joys that live within the future  
But to perish in my grasp!

If there is a time in all life's race  
I should live my being's truth,  
Wisdom's voice is prompt to answer:  
"Live thy life; enjoy thy youth."

Had I not — a romping urchin —  
Turned in glee my summerset,  
I had missed a satisfaction  
Equal to some I now get.

Can the staid and aged lady  
Taste the pleasures of the lass?  
If I would enjoy life's blessings  
I must grasp them as they pass.

Life is not alone for pleasure,  
And its toils I must not shirk.  
May my times of recreation  
Give me relish for my work!

I am not far on my journey  
Up the slope of life's incline,  
Though I pause upon its hill-side,  
For the heights I'll not repine.



I remember how the present,  
When I viewed it from the past,  
Seemed to be all golden tinted,  
With enchantment overcast.

When the heights that lie above me  
Disregard my present place,  
And the valley, whence I've journeyed,  
Vainly tempts me to retrace,

I am pleased when I consider  
How once looked the present spot,  
And that distance lends enchantment  
Could I view it from the top.

I shall glance before and after,  
In the journey of my life,  
But my eyes shall not long wander  
From each present step and strife.  
—*March*, 1896.

ACT ON, ROOSEVELT!  

---

Act on, act on, our nation's chief!  
O all unsought by thee the place!  
And all unhampered now thy hand,  
Thou hast no fear the foe to face!

Act on! while men of every state,  
In field, or shop, or mining shaft,  
Are thrilled to feel you fight their fight  
Against the monsters — Greed and Graft!

Act on! while men of sober years  
And palefaced students own thee right!  
Act on! They fought with feeble force,  
Theirs was a losing fight.

Thou blest of God, in rich degree,  
To bless in turn thy fellow men,  
Thou dost it through that trinity  
On earth: sword, tongue and pen!

O, loath we are to overpraise!  
But, praise to thee, is overdue,  
With trembling lip we can but add:  
The nation's heart is trusting you.

O, coy it is to yield that heart  
As any maiden we have known!  
And, as unwilling to remove  
A trusted idol from its throne.

Act on! Act on! Our boundless faith  
Is in thy righteousness and tact.  
Act on! Act on! A nation's prayer  
Attends thy every act.

TO AN ABSENT FRIEND

---

How thoughts of you rush in on me  
As comes a summer shower at noon,  
And strips the garden of its bloom;  
Drives to its home the laden bee.

O now you seem so far removed!  
But I complain of something more,  
To-morrow I might reach your door,  
But how is distance to be proved?

From Haller's lonely pasture side  
I gain a far view of the west,  
That dimly distant wooded crest  
Your eye and mine had once descried.

But I am now far on this side,  
And farther, far, on that are you;  
Some other ridge lies in your view,  
And I am lonely. Woe betide!

And I, man grown, am as a child  
Who glancing round a market place,  
Beholding no familiar face,  
Breaks out in lamentations wild.

But still you stand in my defense  
And your strong hand upholds my own,  
To think how, uttering no tone,  
You grappled with your circumstance.

The westward moving sun may bend  
To warm you with this passing beam,  
But hills and valleys lie between,  
And you are absent, O my friend!



THE DEATH HOUSE

---

The chimney's fallen on the roof,  
The elders grow beside,  
The winds go whistling through the house  
In which my mother died.

Within this dark and dismal room  
She struggled for her breath;  
The struggle lost, life's battle o'er,  
Her eyes were closed in death.

No art restrained my actions then,  
My tears flowed from my heart,  
I failed to comprehend my loss;  
Mine, was a child's sad part.

My kinsfolk took me on their knees  
While moisture dimmed their eyes;  
And said, with looks of deep concern:  
"How hard the baby cries!"

I wept when she was borne from here,  
My life has told me why.  
O, what about our meeting,  
In the world on high?

SICK

---

I have been sick, sick, sick.  
A three days' illness in my bed;  
I usually am well.  
My friends have said,  
When happily they met me in the street:  
"You're looking well."  
Words cheering, from the heart and the intent.  
But I, as one who searches for the bitter in the sweet,  
Thought they implied I was not always looking well,  
And, what a thing to tell  
To some robust and hearty fellows that we meet:  
"You're looking well."  
"Nice day," would be no farther out of place,  
In lands where yearly, day by day,  
The sun god never hides his face.

I have been sick, sick,  
But not so very sick.  
But still the mealtime's modest pleasure was denied.  
My day was mingled with my night.  
I did not see the breaking light;  
The darkness fading into day;  
The noon-tide melt itself away;  
The evening shading to the night.  
As well might I have been  
Within some crowded city's masoned pile,  
The where to be, were sickness all the while.

When I was sick I heard them talk  
The daily course of business through;  
What this or that one wished to do;  
Another had been here or there.  
And I, than who a day before,

No one had been more free to go,  
Felt my confinement hard to bear,  
And convalescence to be slow.

When I was sick there progressed still  
Some rugged work. I had my part.  
I would be there. I wished to start  
But weakness held me to my chair.

But I am well, and O the spell  
Of pleasure that invades my heart!  
The joy of moving here or there!  
I have no poverty, no care.  
Grant to thy undeserving heir,  
Thy faithless servant, Lord, one prayer,  
One simple joy: To be about.



THE RIDDLE

---

“Adam and Eve and ‘Pinch Me Eve’  
Went down to the creek and bathed.  
Adam and Eve were drowned,  
Now who do you s’pose was saved?”

“Well, if Adam and Eve and ‘Pinch Me Eve’  
Went down to the creek and bathed,  
And Adam and Eve were drowned,  
Why ‘Pinch Me Eve’ was saved.”

As a flash her hand shot forward;  
My nose was then well pinched.  
And in the operation,  
In vain I pulled and flinched.

When my dignity recovered  
And my nose was wiped and dried,  
“You’re Mother Eve,” I ventured,  
“You’re Adam,” she replied.

If I were a great deal younger,  
And you were as old again,  
And you’d repeat that blunder,  
I’d cheerfully be the swain  
Who’s doomed to be your Adam,  
And his being, be thus made twain.

ERRORS

---

When I think of the mistakes, that  
I unwittingly have made,  
The annoying consequences  
That have at my door been laid,

With myself I have no patience;  
I am filled with self-distrust.  
And all reconsideration  
But increases my disgust.

Can it be, that one who made such  
Grievous blunders in the past,  
Ever can possess a judgment  
To depend upon at last?

In my best schemes for improvement  
I have found some hidden wrong;  
Or, some settled course of action  
Must not be pursued too long.

I may set my bark's direction,  
But I must not cease to steer,  
Lest the bark, in moving forward,  
Float wide of the landing pier.

I can never keep on straight lines,  
With but intervals of light,  
So I can but be contented  
If my general course is right.

GEORGE AGED THIRTEEN

---

In this house, George, now so ingrown  
By flowers, by your grandam sown;

In this low house, now so o'ermet  
By tall trees by your grandsire set;

In this brown house, one autumn night,  
Your eyes first saw the candle's light.

And here your form grew lithe and stout,  
And toyed with all things hereabout.

These fields were canvassed o'er and o'er  
For forms and facts they held in store.

And when your range had narrow grown,  
You added all that joined your own.

And then an autumn day was sent,  
Like to the night of your advent.

A fever, with foreboding name,  
Consumed the tissue of your frame.

Before a prayerful mother's sight,  
Your daylight faded into night.

The minister could little say  
Of George, aged thirteen, to a day,

That not of other lives is said:  
"He lived a space; his light is shed."



Your life was short, your world was new;  
As well near Cortland as Larue!

Mosquito Creek, devoid of trout,  
As well as streams bards rave about!

Your life was brief but still you knew  
Some friends are false, and some are true!

The playmate with the auburn hair!  
As well the romance ended there!

And who, that lives life through, shall say,  
Who knows the world, and learns its way,

That they lament your fate, or rue  
That echoes, only, came to you?

POEMS OF NATURE





MORNING TWILIGHT

---

Old Moon now just past the meridian,  
Still westward keeps her ever losing race  
With the fast paling stars. The canvas folds  
Of cloud, torn from their holds in the high arch  
Of heaven's dome, still keep their cowering forms  
Above the solid horizon. While in  
The west a towering pile of simple clouds  
Seems boding evil to the setting sun  
Of yesterday. Vain fragments then, like vain  
And broken men, float from its crest below  
The splendor of the moon. Old Moon herself  
Is paling fast before the coming of  
The sun, and very soon her wasted form  
And waning beauty'll be in keeping with  
Her late arrival among her present  
Consorts. It has begun, for now but few  
Of her once boon companions of the broad  
And glowing zodiac, by the pale light,  
Are willing to be seen helping her from  
Her late revels, down to her western door.

THE RAINY DAY

---

The day's been rainy, drear and dark;  
It grimly paid its due.  
To-night, before the sun sank down  
It burst forth to your view.

This day's been as the life of one:  
Some cold unerring man,  
Whose life's been drear, but at its close  
It brightens all it can.

O, is there not, close to your own,  
A life, a rainy day?  
And, do you view at eventide  
Or at the noon-tide gray?

Or do you think of one now gone,  
Of one now past away,  
Of one you saw at eventide  
And at the noon-tide gray?

A friend he was, unpolished, crude,  
But, O how tried and true!  
His duty, always sternly done,  
Was sternly done to you.

And as those rifts, amid the clouds,  
The deep blue sky disclose,  
He showed the color of his life  
But not until its close.

A light was borrowed from his west  
To tint his eastern skies,  
And thus the color of his youth  
Came forth to greet your eyes.

The sun sank down, the night came on,  
The winds began to blow,  
And that he was a shield to you,  
Now, all too well you know.



THE POET'S PORTION

---

When the full moon in her glory  
Climbs the slope of eastern skies,  
And the stars come forth to sparkle  
Like a maiden's love lit eyes,

When no sound disturbs the quiet  
Of a peaceful, moon-light night,  
And my shadow flits before me  
Stolen from the rich moon-light,

How it seems to me that nature,  
By the stillness she maintains,  
Would impart to me a wisdom  
Well rewarding any pains.

Would that I might be so honored,  
That, when in these moods she dips,  
I could hear the words of wisdom  
That are falling from her lips!

Nature may be often joyous  
But she leaves dull strips between,  
And I know these peaceful moments  
In the moon-beams' mellow sheen

To be like the times a lover  
Holds sweet meetings with his maid,  
Throwing all the time between them  
Into cold and gloomy shade.

Though the hours of joy are fleeting,  
They have served, though they suggest  
Disconnected thoughts and fancies,  
Fast upon each other prest.

Thoughts of life, death, love, wild passions,  
Throb for utterance, in my breast,  
And the peaceful moon-light moments  
End in tumults of unrest.

PARSON BROWN'S WALK

---

The young Parson Brown, neath his minister gown,  
Still fresh in his heart kept the joys  
He had felt in each limb, when companions, with him  
Partook of the pleasures of boys.

He had tasted a gay young man's pleasures,  
With eager, innocent lips,  
Not as one who was cloyed by the cup he enjoyed,  
Condemning the one that now sips.

Whether L.L.L.D., or Ph.A.B.C.,  
I am really unable to tell;  
He had taken some work in the School of the World,  
But he still loved his fellow men well.

He had passed by a beautiful heiress,  
With a spirit not just like a dove,  
And had led to the marriage altar  
The modest, sweet girl of his love.

He had taken holy orders,  
At no very distant day,  
And had come to fan the Gospel flame  
In the little town of A.

One day when a sermon lingered  
And good old Apostle Paul  
Was overworked, and weary,  
And couldn't be used at all,

And the beautiful Garden of Eden  
That witnessed primeval fall  
Had been pruned to the Parson's liking  
And it couldn't be used at all,



The Parson passed from his study  
To his garden, and beyond,  
Over murmuring rills, to the chestnut hills  
That look down on a lily-fringed pond.

He observed that the brook, like some facts of life,  
Must be met, or here, or there,  
But that fairy elves have left to ourselves  
The choice of the when and the where;

That the fruit one sees on forest-trees  
Is seldom hanging low,  
And the pleasant sound, as it falls to the ground,  
Comes from a high aimed blow;

Was the path, that led to this fruited bough,  
Determined by Choice or by Chance?  
Is our destiny formed by the inward force,  
Or the outward circumstance?

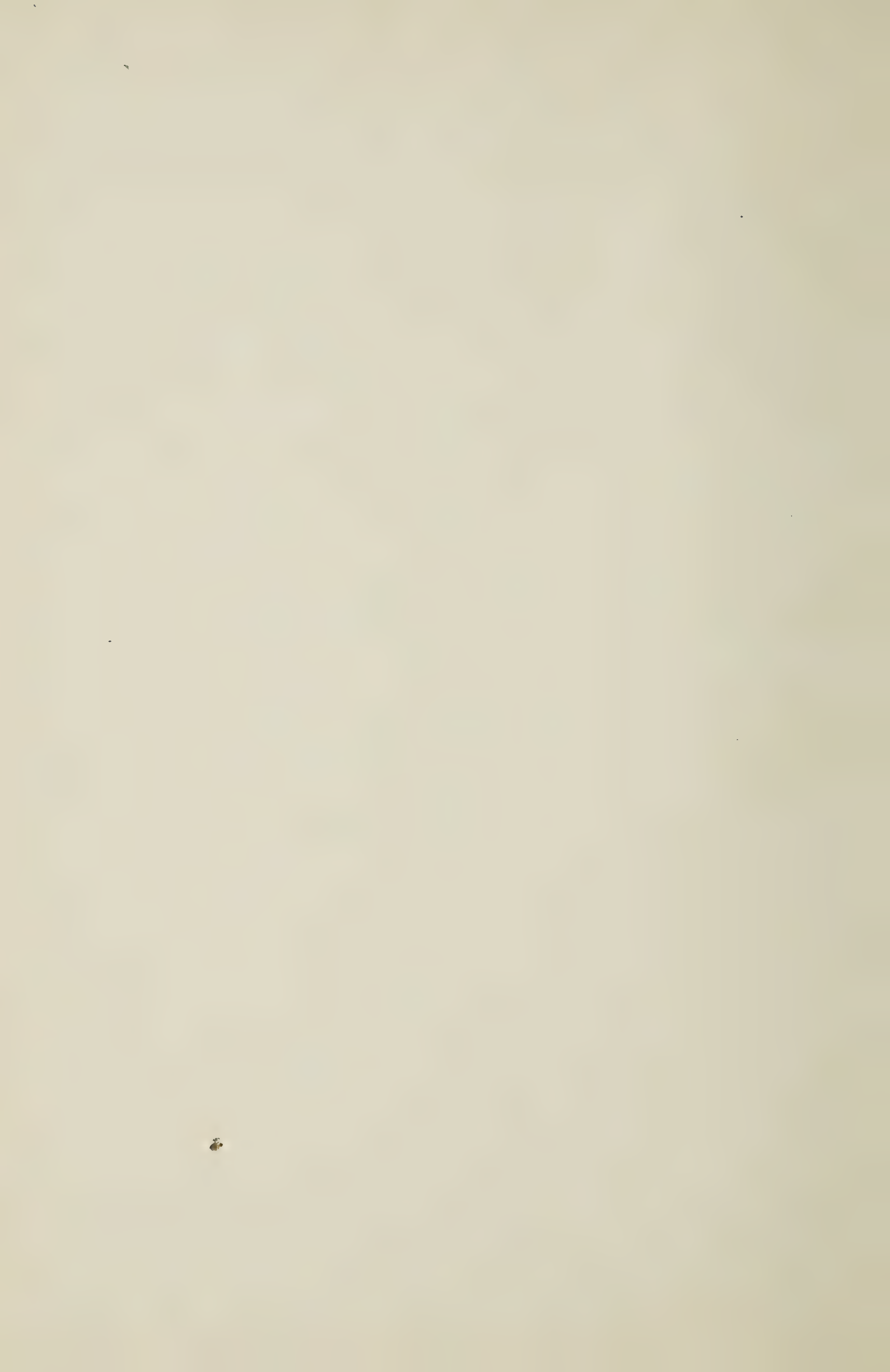
And the Parson conceived of a sermon, that breathed  
Of the spirit that floats over forest and fields;  
And each separate thought came as freely  
As the brown nut, a ripened burr yields.

And when, with a spiritual fervor,  
He spoke to his people next day,  
All admitted, that seldom, if ever, was heard  
Such a powerful sermon in A.



POEMS DEVOTIONAL





## EASTER POEM

---

What a boon to us as sinners  
 On the Resurrection morn,  
 When those women bearing spices  
 To Christ's body bruised, and torn,

Had their grief transformed to gladness  
 By the guarding angel's word!  
 Heard they then the sweetest message  
 That our troubled world has heard:

"He is risen, He is not here,  
 This same Jeseus whom ye seek.  
 Go your way with the glad tidings  
 And to His disciples speak."

Then seek they His presence quickly,  
 With the old affection, save,  
 He is doubly dear, since he has  
 Made the journey of the grave.

We have not His sacred presence,  
 But the greater blessing still,  
 Of his blessed Holy Spirit  
 Our weak, erring hearts to fill.

Mourn we not then for the blessing  
 Of that widely distant day!  
 We are blessed beyond our merits,  
 Though He must needs go away.

SUNDAY MORNING

---

There's something in the fragrant air,  
There's something in the motion  
Of rustling leaves within the breeze  
That aids the heart's devotion.

The sounds we hear are Sunday sounds,  
Their melodies abounding,  
Their harshness lulled, their sharpness dulled,  
How mellow they are sounding!

By tempest tossed, if time were lost,  
Had we no other warning,  
I think we'd know, when the cattle low,  
If it were Sunday morning.

The people place a brighter face  
Before a better temper,  
And better still they bear the ill,  
Whatever their distemper.

We oft have heard it rudely urged  
That men wear Sunday faces.  
Is aught amiss, or wrong in this,  
Or aught that men disgraces,

When to the smile, that all the while  
Is fading from, or forming  
On nature's face, a sweeter grace  
Is added Sunday morning?



POEMS OF SCHOOL LIFE



---

A HARD TEST ON THE CIRCLE

---

A pancake is two feet around;  
A six inch cookie cutter  
Is placed thereon; how much is found,  
Of cake, exposed to butter?



THE DISTRICT SCHOOL

---

I love to teach the district school,  
A monarch in my little realm,  
To ship as pilot, as it were,  
To be intrusted with the helm.

It pleases well my foolish brain  
To think I've taught those, who, when grown,  
In later years perhaps may climb  
To heights excelling far my own.

I love those little boys and girls  
Who come to me with A, B, C,  
Already lisped, together with  
A prayer, beside a mother's knee.

With faith in God and faith in man,  
Need be a millstone then to drown  
The one who would offend them, when  
He must already be cast down?

I love those older boys and girls  
Whose path to pleasure's way inclines.  
I love them, and to prove my love,  
I "chasteneth" the lads betimes.

I love to teach the district school,  
A monarch in my little realm,  
To ship as pilot, as it were,  
To be intrusted with the helm.

It pleases well my foolish brain  
To think I've taught those, who, when grown,  
In later years perhaps may climb  
To heights exceeding far my own.

TO A LITTLE GIRL

---

To-day I've heard the dearest praise  
My too vain heart has ever known,  
Expressed by a small maid, sweet as  
Her kindred spirits round God's throne.

'Tis simply told: my school is out,  
To-day completes the two years' score  
Of school I've taught here. 'Tis decreed  
That school is here forever o'er.

The children comment on it all,  
A small maid pauses in her play,  
Her sweetest smile upon her face,  
Has turned to me with this to say:

"I guess we'll have no more school here,  
That's what they say, but if we do,  
We'll need a teacher, and I hope,  
If any one, it will be you."

O dearest praise! O small, sweet maid!  
You little know how, what you've done  
Has smoothed the rough uneven way,  
Or fed the hungry heart of one,

Who, since he knows you as you are,  
Is better pleased, by far, than though,  
Instead of your expressing this,  
His list of patrons told him so.

Though other maids wish to be loved,  
And labor with that end in view,  
They never can forge half the ties  
That bind us, one and all, to you.

I hear a cry expressive of  
A pang so keen no child can hide  
Who struggled for a place, and failed  
To reach one that is by your side.

Your girlish grace is everything!  
An awkward circumstance to face,  
Your artlessness comes to your aid.  
You never can seem out of place.

And can it be, O happy thought!  
With two long years of school life o'er,  
If such as you express the wish  
That we might be together more,

The sacred fire which in you burns,  
Of which your being seems possessed,  
Has crept along my love, and lit  
A kindred flame within my breast?

I gaze upon fair womanhood,  
The symbol of the full-blown flower,  
But watch with greater interest still,  
This bud, at its unfolding hour.

I therefore count hers dearest praise  
My too vain heart has ever known,  
Expressed by a small maid, sweet as  
Her kindred spirits round God's throne.

TO WOMAN AND WOMANHOOD





TO AN INTERESTING YOUNG LADY

---

That I've known you from youth  
Must be far from the truth,  
For, of late, I begin to surmise  
That I know you not yet,  
For, of late, you have let  
A flash-light on, to dazzle my eyes.

Once you told me, you'll own,  
You wished sooner you'd known  
That a woman should not be seen through.  
That you did not, I'm glad,  
Though it make you feel sad,  
Lest an enchanted labyrinth you.

I'll judge lightly since this,  
Lest I judge some amiss,  
For in you, I believe I have found  
That the aeriest thought,  
When to light it is brought,  
May be based upon reasoning profound.

Since your make-up is such  
Of a problem so much,  
To a gold mine then let it compare,  
In the which, while I work,  
A rude barbarous Turk,  
I have found also diamonds in there.

Some women I don't  
Understand, and I won't  
In pursuit of a dull problem go;  
For, I fear I should find  
Still more flaws in mankind;  
Of too many already I know.

But yours is a gay  
Colored rainbow, at play  
On a slope of the fairyland skies,  
Nor will it permit  
Me to gaze long at it,  
And at times when I follow, it flies.

But now I must complain  
With some feeling of pain,  
Of a game not a little unfair:  
With a glance of your eyes  
At a lad of my size,  
You have read almost everything there.

THE SINGER

---

I heard a maiden trill a song,  
A soft melodious song of love,  
And, as I listened to the swell  
Of music as from heaven above,

Methought her eyes upon me fell.  
But ah, she granted no such boon!  
I was included in the glance  
That swept the entire audience room.

She sang of some poor wretched lad  
That time or place had torn apart —  
Meanwhile all joys were lost to him —  
From the sweet mistress of his heart.

She sang. And sweet her music fell  
Upon my dull untutored ear,  
Ah, mortals then were treated to  
Such music as the angels hear!

Yet though she traced this love-sick lad  
Through all his drear heart wand'rings long,  
She's never felt a pang akin  
To those that echoed in her song.

For not one joy is lost to her,  
This merry, singing little elf;  
For happiness abides with her,  
Or dwells incarnate in herself.

Could she have felt the slightest thrill  
Of all the pain, that surged within  
The breast of him of whom she sang,  
What might her music not have been?



TO \_\_\_\_\_  
  
\_\_\_\_\_

I am eager, more than eager,  
For a faith in woman's worth.  
Books and men have sought to chill it  
As the wild winds from the north.

If my native faith was shaken,  
Or, if it were trembling yet,  
You have re-enforced it, more than  
Any other I have met.

Some are very apt at saying  
Things they do not, can not, feel;  
Others, feeling them, consider  
Them too sacred to reveal.

So I've found it with your actions  
At the times you gave no light,  
It appeared on last inspection  
You were striving to do right.

Do not think a lively fancy,  
Coupled with the crime of youth,  
In these lines has made me wander  
One iota from the truth.

LOVE'S FAERY LAND

---

As one who enters faery halls  
    With all compartments lit at night,  
    And cannot see the image right,  
The ceiling lifts, the pavement falls,  
  
Or, when his foot falls on the floor,  
    The faeries skip in hurried flight,  
    Some to the left, some to the right,  
Through mystic arch or magic door;  
  
Till things that fast before him flew,  
    Whose eyes were dazzled with the sight,  
    Yet stayed, in half fear, half delight,  
Become as fixtures to his view.  
  
Till, to the half unwelcome guest  
    Each faery's elfish face has grown  
    Almost familiar as his own:  
The darksome fruit of thankless quest.  
  
And when the mesh is wandered through,  
    No magic dome left to be found,  
    Or mystic chamber underground,  
The guest is left with nothing new;  
  
He grants it beautiful, and fair  
    As mind of man could e'er conceive,  
    Yet is unwilling to believe  
The mystery vanished in the air.  
  
So came I to your realm of life,  
    So things that fast before me sped,  
    Now keep a settled state, instead  
Of swinging round in seeming strife.

I grant it beautiful and fair  
As mind of man could e'er conceive,  
And too, unwillingly believe  
The mystery vanished in the air.

And like that other one, I cast  
A long, regretful glance behind,  
And lose my innocence, and find  
Illusions are too sweet to last.

As one who wanders in a trance,  
Perchance not knowing where he goes,  
Yet thinking that he wills and knows,  
And enters faery lanes by chance;

And strolls at will adown these lanes,  
Or treads at leisure through their halls;  
Enjoys the music of the walls,  
Yet to no other ear profanes

What there he heard, or there he saw;  
Is their discoverer, and they —  
The laborer's worthy of his pay —  
Are not they his by custom's law?

What says the chiefest faery now?  
And clear or clouded is her brow?  
And, what the image now I trace  
Upon this winsome faery's face?

Or, is the elfish form so fair,  
It dare not hang a picture there,  
Till one may read of doubtful trust,  
Of deep reproof, or mild disgust?

I've heard it said a woman's face  
Is like a mirror. Men may trace  
Upon whose surface foul or fair,  
Their own reflected image there.

Before this faery, feminine,  
I sport the rugged form of mine.  
Slight compensation now I ask  
For my not uncongenial task,  
If o'er her face this gale has blown  
The fleeting image of my own.





POEMS FROM A LIGHT HEART



---

BLOOMERS

---

I am wheeling, meekly wheeling,  
Through a large and modern town.  
What is that, that's also wheeling  
On the street, but further down?

What an awful waste of dry-goods!  
What a bloated, quartered form!  
It would need but two or three such  
Just to take our town by storm!

I must meet it on the side-walk!  
To escape, is there no chance?  
And my breath came just as it came,  
Both were coming in short pants.

—June, 1895.



A LOVE BALLAD

---

The fable of the fox and grapes  
To love was ne'er applied.  
For, if one heart is lightly won,  
Another must be tried.

Sweet Jennie wins without a thought  
Poor Johnnie's honest heart;  
Proceeds to try, on other men,  
The power of her art.

But Johnnie, all the wretched while,  
Lifts up imploring hands,  
And hopes to bind his Jennie down  
With matrimonial bands.

When Jennie's charms elsewhere have failed,  
She falls in Johnnie's arms,  
Content to rest upon his breast,  
Her beauty and her charms.

Forthwith though Johnnie's noddle runs  
This thought, it lively whirls:  
"I've won the heart of Jennie here,  
I can of other girls."

Then Jennie, all the wretched while,  
Lifts up imploring hands,  
And hopes to bind her Johnnie down  
With matrimonial bands.

The course of love is mostly rough,  
But when it does run smooth,  
The lovers' hearts, at the same time  
Must follow the same groove.

When ladies cry out in dismay:  
    "I never can win him!"  
While lovers pace the floor and say:  
    "My chances must be slim!"

They meet before they leave these moods.  
    The tender vows are passed,  
Then courtship's hap —? unhappy days  
    Have reached an end at last.

They enter then upon a life  
    With more or less of bliss.  
We hope not many couples have  
    As bad a fuss as this!

FOR A LITERARY OCCASION

---

If the baby has been humored  
By the writing of a rhyme,  
And the flowing dactyl meter  
To the rocking crib kept time,

I have found the wild caprices  
Of the child, become half grown,  
Are to be explained in language  
In which meter is not known.

I was placed upon this program,  
I should the project fail or "flunk,"  
(I am using rude expressions)  
It is not all "my own skunk."

The committee on the program  
Need not tremble though it knows  
That, in giving me a poem,  
It has bared its breast for blows.

I shall wage no losing warfare  
With the man upon the chair,  
For I know I should be worsted,  
If it came to pulling hair.

Though this local "literary"  
Is the subject of my song,  
I may fail to sing its praises  
In the high key they belong.

Do not think of me unkindly,  
Or consider it amiss,  
If I say, with painful frankness:  
"I've seen greater things than this."

If the critic's ears were sharpened  
By my smooth and polished piece,  
With a smile of satisfaction  
He'd divest it of its fleece.

This perhaps the way he'd do it:  
"Here no poetry I find,  
Rather, find I, hollow soundings  
Set to meter and to rhyme."

With all this circumlocution  
You are lost, and so am I,  
And the time is far past night-fall,  
Yet we shall not heave a sigh.

Were you lost before? I wonder,  
Or, have you this fact to learn:  
People, lost, move round in circles  
And to starting points return?

And we started in at *nowhere*,  
So at *nowhere* we've come out,  
Yet our trip has been no failure:  
We have put wild geese to rout.



OUT OF SORTS AT THE MERRY-MAKING

---

To-night you've made an awkward move  
In everything you've done.  
But what of that? No difference!  
The others had the fun.

That this is bad philosophy,  
Experience will tell.  
It is the kind that we may use  
When all is running well.

To-day your appetite was bad,  
Your stomach not quite right!  
You should have shown more sense, I think,  
Than to come here to-night.

You're ill? You have my sympathy.  
O no, you're far from sick!  
You're very well, your thanks to me!  
Your mind's a little thick.

You're sitting moodily around,  
You wear a gloomy face.  
You *see* that you are *here* all right,  
But *feel* you're *out of place*.

Your friends have found it hard to see,  
How, with a face so sad,  
That you can fail to either be  
A little sick, or mad.

You're feeling in too bad a mood  
To act as you're wont to;  
The shafts of wit go round and round;  
Some one has bantered you.

But something else has happened now,  
All eyes are turned to it.  
A hearty voice roars just in time  
To drown your feeble hit.

A friend comes, very mindful  
Of what you must require,  
To humor you a little, lest  
You set some house afire.

You've many friends, and plenty here,  
But friends like this, you've none:  
With wit to see when you are dull,  
And would be left alone.

Recall your old philosophy!  
Relief will come, some how.  
Bring back your ease with one horse laugh!  
Suppose you try it now!

O horrors! O what ghastly grins  
Across your features play!  
The eyes that you cast to-wards him  
Refuse to come away!

The corners of your mouth have caught,  
They'll not come back to place.  
You'll have to take your hand to smooth  
That grimace from your face.

Your gaze you broke and this is how,  
But was it all fair play?  
Suppose it not the time is past:  
You turned your head away.

You say your stomach's out of whack?  
You're up too much at night!  
Go home and take a good night's rest,  
To-morrow you'll be right.

THE CYCLOPEDIA MAN

---

I'm accosted in my office  
By a wicked looking man,  
Who is selling cyclopedias,  
And he says: "Perhaps I can —."

"No you can't!" I rose and shouted,  
"No you can't! You never can!"  
(I'm about six feet in stature  
And a thorough business man).

"Yes, you're used to having reasons!  
I am willing to give mine,  
Sir, I couldn't learn to ride one.  
If I could, I haven't time."

Well, that real and living agent  
Turned and chuckled from the room,  
And I never saw an agent  
Treat so lightly such a doom.

Yes, I've learned to handle agents,  
Just as any body can,  
And I'm not to be horn-swaggled  
By a cyclopedia man!

COURTSHIP OF ADAM AND EVE

---

The day was drawing close to Eve,  
With Eden in a hush,  
And so was Adam, I believe,  
As he came through the brush.

But who is that beside her, pray?  
Poor Adam thinks he knows,  
To-night the Satan's in the way,  
When Adam would propose.

An angry flush o'erspread his face,  
It was subdued with pride.  
He knew that imp would find a place  
By each prospective bride.

Now Adam's form was lithe and tall,  
And large of girth, to boot;  
But if our hero blushed at all,  
He blushed from head to foot.

He cleared his voice, prepared to say, —  
But ere the man could speak,  
Old Satan cast a glance his way  
And Adam took a sneak.

But he returned, another time,  
When Satan was not there,  
And wooed his Eve, amid the kine,  
With cowslips in her hair.

And when his heart was in his mouth,  
Where words would never come,  
He knew full well, a fainting heart  
Fair lady never won.



But Adam set the custom when  
He popped the quest at Eve.  
So Cupid's other wounded men  
That job till sundown leave.

She asked him if he'd loved before.  
He said he never could.  
Would he be kind, and something more?  
And Adam said he would.

When Satan made a friendly call,  
Be Adam's action praised!  
Ad. threw him over the garden wall,  
So he the devil raised.

And mother Eve saw, with a smile,  
Her husband raising Pain,  
And was well pleased. She after while  
Was Abel to raise Cain.

LARUE

---

O Larue, Fair Larue,  
I have just heard of you;  
Such a quaintly named village  
I never passed through!

Were you named for some maiden  
With loveliness laden,  
All glanced at the casement  
She gayly looked through?

O the poetry too,  
That attaches to you,  
That dear little,  
Queer little,  
Name of Larue!

O you rhyme so, with *true*,  
Which, in turn, suggests *blue*,  
That you dwell in my fancy,  
Whatever I do!

Were a maiden so fair,  
Of such quality rare,  
No one ever dared  
Give her name to the air;  
No youth e'er embraced her,  
No wealth e'er pur-chased her:  
I would claim her,  
Nor blame her,  
And name her Larue!















